

(13)

A

NARRATIVE OF THE SUFFERINGS



Preservation and Deliverance

OF

Capt. John Deane &c.

As it was Printed in 1711. and now re-
printed in 1722.

THE *Nottingham Gally*, of and from *London*,
120 Tons, 10 Guns, and 14 Men, *John*
Deane Commander; having taken in Cordage
in *England*, and Butter and Cheese in *Ireland*,
Sail'd for *Boston* in *New-England*, the 25th of *September*,
1710. But meeting with contrary Winds and bad
Weather, 'twas the Beginning of *December* when first
made Land to the Eastward of *Piscataqua*, and haling
Southerly for the *Massachuset's-Bay*, under a hard gale
of Wind at *North-East*, accompanied with Rain,
Hail and Snow, having no Observation for 10 or
12 Days. We on the Eleventh handed all our Sailes,
except our Fore-Sail, and Main-Top-Sail double
reeft, ordering one Hand forward to look out: Be-
tween 8 and 9 going forward my self, I saw the Break-
ers a Head, whereupon I call'd out to put the Helm
hard a Starboard, but 'ere the Ship cou'd wear, we
struck

struck upon the Rock called *Boon-Island*, 7 Leagues to the Eastward of *Piscataqua*.

The Second or Third Sea heav'd the Ship along Side of it, running likewise so very high, and the Ship labouring so excessively that we were nat able to stand upon Deck, and notwithstanding it was not above 30 or 40 Yards, yet the Weather was so thick and dark we cou'd not see the Rock, so that we were justly thrown into a Consternation, at the sad Prospect of immediately perishing in the Sea. I presently call'd down all Hands to the Cabin, where we continu'd a few Minutes earnestly supplicating Mercy; but knowing Prayers without Endeavours are vain, I order'd all up again, to cut the Masts by the board, but several sunk so under Racks of Conscience, that they were not able to stir: However, we upon Deck cut the Wethermost Shrouds, and the Ship heeling towards the Rock, the Force of the Sea soon broke the Masts, so that they fell right towards the Shore.

One of the Men went out on the Boltspright, and returning, told me he saw something black a Head, and wou'd adventure to get on Shore, accompanied with any other Person; upon which I desir'd some of the best Swimmers (my Mate and one more) to go with him, and if they recover'd the Rock, to give Notice by their Calls; and direct us to the most secure Place; and remembring some Money and Papers that might be of use, also Ammunition, Brandy, &c. I went down and open'd the Place in which they were, but the Ship bulging, her Decks opening, her Back broke, and Beams giving Way, so that the Stern sunk almost under Water, I was oblig'd to hasten forward, to prevent immediate perishing: And having heard nothing of the Men gone before, concluded them lost - yet notwithstanding, I was under a Necessity to make the same Adventure upon the Fore-Mast, moving gradually forward betwixt every Sea, till at last quitting it, I cast my self with all the Strength I had toward the Rock, and it being dead low

low Water and the Rock exceeding slippery I cou'd get no hold, but tore my Fingers, Hands and Arms in a most lamentable Manner; every Wash of the Sea fetching me off again, so that it was with the utmost Peril and Difficulty that I got safe on Shore at last. The Rest of the Men running the same Hazard yet thro' Mercy we all escap'd with our Lives.

After endeavouring to discharge the Salt-Water, and creeping a little Way up the Rock, I heard the Three Men mentioned before, and by Ten all met together; where with joyful Hearts we return'd humble Thanks to Providence for our Deliverance from so eminent a Danger; we then endeavour'd to gain Shelter to the Lee-ward of the Rock, but found it so small and inconsiderable, that it wou'd afford none (being but about 100 Yards long, and 50 broad) and so very craggy, that we cou'd not walk to keep our selves warm, the Weather still continuing extream cold, with Snow and Rain.

As soon as Day-light appear'd, I went towards the Place where we came on Shore, not questioning but we should meet with Provisions enough from the Wreck for our Support, but found only some Pieces of the Masts and Yards, amongst some old Junk and Cables conger'd together, which the Anchors had preventad from being carried away, and kept moving about the Rock at some Distance: Part of the Ships Stores with some Pieces of Plank and Timber, old Sails and Canvas, &c. drove on Shore, but nothing to eat, except some small Pieces of Cheese we pick'd up from among the Rock-Weeds (in the whole to the Quantity of three small Cheeses).

We used our utmost Endeavor to get Fire, (having Steel and Flint with us, also by a Drill with a very swift Motion) but having nothing but what had been long water-fok'd, we could not effect it.

At Night we stow'd one upon another (under our Canvas) in the best Manner possible, to keep each other warm; and the next Day the Weather a little clearing, and inclining to Frost, I went out, and

seeing the main Land knew where we was, therefore encouraged my Men with Hopes of being discovered by fishing Shallops, &c. requiring them to go about, and fetch up what Planks they could get, (as also Carpenters Tools and Stores &c.) in order to build a Tent and a Boat: The Cook then complaining he was almost starv'd, and his Countenance discovering his Illness, I ordered him to remain with 2 or 3 more the Frost had seiz'd: About noon the Men acquainted me that he was dead, so laid him in a convenient Place for the Sea to carry him away; none mentioning eating of him, tho' several with my self afterwards acknowledged, had *Thoughts of it*.

After we had been there two or three Days, the Frost being very severe, the Weather extream cold, it seized most of our Hands and Feet to such a Degree, as to take away the Sence of Feeling, & render them almost useless; so benumbing and discolouring them, as gave us just Reason to fear Mortification. We pull'd off our Shocs, and cut off our Boots, but in getting off our Stockings, many whose Legs were blister'd, pull'd off Skin and all, and some the Nails of their Toes; we wrap'd up our Legs and Feet as warm as we could in Oakum and Canvas.

We now began to build our Tent in a triangular Form, each Angle about 8 Foot, covered with what Sails and old Canvas came on Shore, having just Room for all to lie down each on one Side, so that none cou'd turn except all turn'd, which was about every two Hours, upon Notice given: We also fix'd a Staff to the Top of our Tent, upon which (as often as Weather wou'd permit) we hoisted a Piece of Cloth in the Form of a Flag, in order to discover our selves to any Vessels that might come near.

We began now to build our Boat of Plank and Timber belonging to the Wreck; our Tools the Blade of a Cutlash (made into a Saw with our Knives) a Hammer and a Caulking Mallet: Some Nails we found in the Cliffs of the Rock, others we got from the Sheathing; we laid 3 Planks flat for the Bottom, and

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Two up each Side fix'd to stanchings, and let into the bottom Timbers, with two short Pieces at each End, also one Breadth of new Holland Duck round the Sides, to keep out the Spry of the Sea: We cork'd all we could with Oakum drawn from the old junk, and in other Places, fill'd up the Distances with long Pieces of Canvas, all which we secured in the best Manner possible; we found also some Sheet Lead and Pump Leather, which proved of use; we fix'd a short Mast and square Sail, with Seven Paddles to row, and another longer to steer; but our Carpenter who now should have been of most use to us, was (by reason of Illness) scarce able to afford us either Assistance or Advice; and all the Rest so benumb'd and Feeble as not able to stir, except my self and 2 more, also the Weather so extream cold, that we could seldom stay out of the Tent above 4 Hours in the Day, and some Days do nothing at all.

When we had been there about a Week without any manner of Provisions, except the Cheese before mentioned and some Beefe Bones, which we eat (first breaking them to Pieces); we saw 3 Boats about 5 Leagues from us, which may be easily imagined rejoiced us not a little, believing our Deliverance was now come: I made all creep out of the Tent, and hallow together (so well as our Strength would allow) making also all the Signals we could, but alas all in vain; they neither hearing nor otherwise discovering us: However we receiv'd no small Encouragement from the sight of 'em, they coming from S. West, and the Wind at N. E. when we were cast away, gave us reason to conclude our Distress might be known by the Wreck driving on Shear, and to presume were come out in search of us, and that would Daily do so when Weather would permit; thus we flatter'd our selves in hopes of Deliverance tho' in vain.

Just before we had finished our Boat, Providence so ordered it, that the Carpenter's Ax was cast on the Rock to us, whereby we were enabled to complet

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our Work; but then we had scarce Strength enough to get her into the Water.

About the 21st (*December*) the Boat just perfected, a fine Day, and the Water smother than I had ever yet seen it since we came there, we consulted who shou'd attempt getting on Shore, I offering my self as one to adventure, which they agreed to, because I was the strongest, and therefore fittest to undergoe the Extremities we might be reduced to. My Mate also offering himself, and desiring to accompany me, I was allow'd him with my Brother, and four more; so committing our Enterprize to Divine Providence, all that were able came out, and with much Difficulty we got our poor patch'd up Boat to the Water Side; and the Surf running very high, was obliged to wade very deep to launch her, which being done, and my self and one more got into her, the Swell of the Sea heav'd her along Shore, and overset her upon us, (whereby we again narrowly escap'd drowning) and stav'd our poor Boat all to peices: Totally disappointing our Enterprize and destroying all our Hopes at once.

And as that which still heighten'd our Afflictions, and serv'd to aggravate our miserable prospects, and render our Deliverance less practicable: We lost with our Boat, both our Ax and Hammer, which wou'd have been of great Use to us if we should hereafter attempt to build a Raft, yet had we reason to admire the Goodness of God, in over-ruling our Disappointment, for our Safety; for that Afternoon, the Wind springing up it blew very hard, so that had we been at Sea in that imitation of a Boat, in all probability we must have perish'd, and the rest left behind had no better Fate, because unable to help themselves.

We are now reduc'd to the most deplorable and melancholly Circumstances imaginable, almost every Man but my self, weak to an Extremity, and near starved with Hunger and Cold; their Hands and Feet frozen and mortified, with large and deep Ulcers in their Legs (the very smell offensive to those of us, who

who could creep into the Air) and nothing to dress them with, but a Piece of Linnen that was cast on Shore. No Fire, and the Weather extream cold; our small Stock of Cheese spent, and nothing to support our feeble Bodies but Rock-weed and a few Muscles, scarce and difficult to get (at most, not above 2 or 3 for each Man a Day). So that we had our miserable Bodies perishing, and our poor disconsolate Spirits overpowered, with the deplorable Prospect of starving, without any Appearance of Relief: Besides, to heighten (if possible) the Aggravation, we had reason to apprehend, least the approaching Spring-Tide (if accompanied with high Wind) would totally overflow us. How dismal such a Circumstance must be, is imposible to express; the pinching Cold and Hunger. extremity of Weakness and Pain, Racks and Horror of Conscience (to many) and Foresight of certain and painful (but lingering) Death, without any (even the most remote) views of Deliverance. How heighten'd? How aggravated? Is such Misery! and yet alas such was our deplorable Case: insomuch that the greater Part of our Company were ready to die with Horror and Despair, without the least Hopes of Escaping.

For my own Part, did my utmost to encourage myself, and exhort the rest to trust in God and patiently wait for his Salvation; and Providence, a little to alleviate our Distress, and encourage our Faith, directed my Mate to strike down a Sea Gull, which he joyfully brought to me, and I equally divided every one a Portion; and (tho' raw and scarce every one a Mouthful) yet we received and eat thankfully.

The last Method of Safety we could possibly propose, was, the fixing a Raft that might carry Two Men, which was mightily urged by one of our Men, Sweed, a stout brave Fellow, but had since our Distress lost both his Feet by the Frost; he frequently importun'd me, to attempt our Deliverance in that Way, offering himself to accompany me, or if I refused him to go alone: After deliberate Thoughts and

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Consideration, we resolv'd upon a Raft, but found abundance of Labour and Difficulty in clearing the Fore-Yard (of which it was chiefly to be made) from the Junk, by reason our working Hands were so few and weak.

That done, we split the Yard, and with the two Parts made Side Pieces, fixing others, and adding some of the lightest Plank we cou'd get, first spiking and afterwards seizing them firm, in breadth 4 Foot: We likewise fix'd a Mast, and of two Hammocks that weredrove on Shore we made a Sail, with a Paddle for each Man and a spare one in Case of Necessity. This Difficulty thus surmounted and brought to a period, he wou'd frequently ask me whether I design'd to accompany him, giving me also to understand that if I declin'd, there was another ready to embrace the Offer.

About this Time we saw a Sail come out of *Piscataqua* River, about 7 Leagues to the Westward, we again made all the signal we cou'd, but the Wind being at N. West, and the Ship standing to the Eastward, was presently out of sight, without ever comming near us, which prov'd a very great Mortification to our Hopes; but the next Day being moderate, and in the Afternoon a small Breze right on Shoar, also the Raft wholly finish'd, the two Men were very solicitous to have it launch'd, and the Mate as strenuously oppos'd it, on account it was so late (being 2 in the Afternoon) but they urging the light Nights, beg'd of me to have it done, to which at last I agreed, first committing the Enterprize to God's Blessing; they both got upon it, and the Swell rowling very high soon overset them as it did our Boat; the Sweed not minding it swam on Shore, but the other (being no Swimmer) continu'd some Time under Water, and as soon as appear'd I caught hold of him and sav'd him, but was so discourag'd, that he was afraid to make a second Attempt.

I desir'd the Sweed to wait a more favourable Opportunity, but he continuing resolute, beg'd me to go with him, or help him to turn the Raft, and would go himself alone.

By this Time another Man came down and offer'd to adventure, so getting upon the Raft I launch'd 'em off, they desiring us to go to Prayers, also to watch what became of them; I did so, and by Sun-set judg'd them half Way to the Main, and that they might reach the Shoar by 2 in the Morning: But I suppose they fell in with some Breakers, or the Violence of the Sea overset them and they perish'd; for two Days after, the Raft was found on Shore, and one Man dead about a Mile from it, with a Paddle fastened to his Wrist, but the Sweed who was so very forward to adventure, was never heard of more.

We upon the desolate Island not knowing what had befallen them, waited daily for Deliverance, and our expectations were the more heightened by a smook we saw in the Woods, two Days after (the Signal appointed if arriv'd safe) which continued every Day, and being willing to believe it made on our Account, tho' saw no appearance of any thing towards our Relief, yet suppos'd the Delay was occasion'd, by their not being able to procure a Vessel so soon as we desir'd; and this Hope under God, serv'd to bear up our Spirits and Support us much.

But still our great Want was Provisions; having nothing to eat but Rockweed and a very few Muscles, and the Spring-Tide being (thank God safely over) we cou'd scarce get any at all. I have gone my self (no other Person being able) several Days at low Water, and cou'd get no more than 2 or 3 a Piece, and have frequently been in Danger of losing my Hands and Arms by putting them so often in the Water, which when got, my Stomach refus'd, and rather chose Rockweed.

At our first coming saw several *Seals* upon the Rock, and supposing they might harbour there in the Night, I walkt round at Midnight, but cou'd never get any Thing: We also saw a great many Fowles, but they Perceiving us daily there, wou'd never come on the Rock to lodge, so that we caught none.

Which Disappointment was very greivous and still serv'd to irritate our Mileries, but it was more especially afflicting to a Brother I had with me, and another young Gentleman, who had never (either of 'em) been at Sea, or endur'd any Severities before; but were now reduc'd to the last Extreanities, having no assistance but what they receiv'd from me.

Part of a Green Hide being thrown up by the Sea, (fasten'd to a Piece of a Main-Yard) the Men importun'd me to bring it to the Tent, which being done we minc'd it small and swallow'd it down.

About this Time I set the Men to open Junck, and with the Rope-Yarn (when Weather would permit) I thatcht the Tent in the best Manner my Strength wou'd allow; that it might the better shelter us from Extremities of Weather: And it prov'd of so much Service as to turn 2 or 3 Hours Rain, and preserve us from the cold pinching Winds which were always very severe upon us.

About the latter End of this Month (*viz. December*) our Carpenter (a fat Man, and naturally of a dull, heavy, Phlegmatick Constitution and Disposition, aged about 47) who from our first coming on Shore, had been always ~~been~~ very ill, and lost the Use of his Feet, complain'd of an excessive Pain in his Back, and Stiffness in his Neck: being likewise almost choakt with Phlegm (for Want of Strength to discharge it) so that to our Apprehension he drew near his End. We prai'd over him, and us'd our utmost Endeavours to be serviceable to him in his last Moments; he shew'd himself sensible tho' speechless, and that Night died: We suffered the Body to remain with us 'till Morning, when I desir'd them who were best able, to remove it; creeping out my self, to see if Providence had yet sent us any thing, to satisfie our extreamly craving Appetites: Before Noon returning and not seeing the dead Body without, I ask'd why they had not remov'd it? And receiv'd for Answer, they were not all of them able: Whereupon fastening a Rope to the Body, I gave the Utmost of my Assistance, and
with

with some Difficulty we got it out of the Tent. But the Fatigue and Consideration of our Misery together, so overcame my Spirits, that being ready to faint I crept into the Tent, and was no sooner got in there, but (as the highest Addition of Trouble) the Men began to request of me the dead Body to eat, the better to support their Lives.

This, of all I had met with, was the most greivous and shocking to me, to see my self and Company, who came thither laded with Provisions but three Weeks before, now reduc'd to such a deplorable Circumstance, as to have two of us absolutely starv'd to Death, other two we knew not what was become of, and the Rest of us at the last Extreamity and (tho' still living, yet) requiring to eat the Dead for Support.

After Abundance of mature Thought and Consultation about the Lawfullness or Sinfulness on the one Hand, and absolute Necessity on the other; Judgment, Conscience, &c. were oblig'd to submit to the more prevailing Arguments of our craving Appetites; so that at last we determined to satisfy our Hunger and support our feeble Bodies with the Carcass in Possession: first ordering his Skin, Head, Hands, Feet and Bowels to be buried in the Sea, and the Body to be quarter'd for Conveniency of drying and carriage, to which I again receiv'd for Answer, that they were not all of them able, but entreated I wou'd perform it for them; A Task very greivous, and not readily comply'd with, but their incessant Prayers and Intreaties at last prevail'd, and by Night I had perform'd my Labour.

I then cut Part of the Flesh in thin Slices, and washing it in Saltwater, brought it to the Tent, and oblig'd the Men to eat Rockweed along with it, to serve in stead of Bread.

My Mate and two others, refus'd to eat any that Night, but next Morning complied, and earnestly desir'd to partake with the Rest.

I found they all eat abundance and with the utmost Greediness, so that I was constrain'd to carry the Quar-

ters farther from the Tent, (quite out of their Reach) least they shou'd prejudice themselves by overmuch eating, as also expend our small Stock too soon.

I also limited each Man to an equal Proportion, that none might quarel, or entertain hard thoughts of my self, or one another, and I was the more oblig'd to this Method, because I found (in a few Days) their very natural Dispositions chang'd, and that affectionate, peacable Temper they had all along hitherto, discover'd totally lost; their Eyes staring and looking wild, their Countenances fierce and barbarous, and instead of obeying my Commands (as they had universally and readily done before) I found all I cou'd say (even Prayers and Entreaties vain and fruitless) nothing now being to be heard ^{but} brutish Quarrels, with horrid Oaths and Imprecations, instead of that quiet submissive Spirit of Prayer and Supplication we had before enjoy'd.

This, together with the dismal Prospect of future Want, oblig'd me to keep a strict Watch over the Rest of the Body, least any of 'em shou'd (if able) get to it, and this being spent, we be forc'd to feed upon the living: Which we must certainly have done, had we staid a few Days longer.

But now the Goodness of God began to appear, and make Provision for our Deliverance, by putting it in the Hearts of the good People on Shore, where our Raft drove, to come out in Search of us; which they did the 2d of *January* in the Morning.

Just as I was creeping out of the Tent, I saw a Shallop half Way from the Shore, standing directly towards us, which may be easily imagined was Life from the Dead; how great our Joy and Satisfaction were, at the Prospect of so speedy and unexpected Deliverance, no Tongue is able to express, nor Thoughts to conceive.

Our good and welcome Friends came to an Anchor to the *South-West*, at about 100 Yards distance, (the Swell not suffering them to come nearer) but their Anchor coming home, oblig'd them to stand off 'till about

about Noon, waiting for smother Water upon the Flood: Mean Time our Passions were differently mov'd, our Expectations of Deliverance, and Fears of Miscarriage, hurry'd our weak and disorder'd Spirits strangely.

I gave them Account of our Miseries in every Respect, except the Want of Provisions (which I did not mention, least I shou'd not get them on shore for fear of being constrain'd by the Weather to tarry with us): Earnestly entreating them to attempt our immediate Deliverance; or at least (if possible) to furnish us with Fire, which with the ut most Hazard and Difficulty they at last accomplished, by sending a small Canoe with one Man, who with abundance of Labour got on Shore.

After helping him up with his Canoe, and seeing nothing to eat, I ask'd him if he cou'd ~~give~~ give us Fire, he answer'd in the Affirmative, but was so affrighted, (seeing me look so thin and meger) that could hardly at first return me an Answer: But recollecting himself, after several Questions askt on both Sides, he went with me to the Tent, where was surpriz'd to see so many of us in so deplorable Condition.

Our Flesh so wasted, and our Looks so gasty and frightful, that it was really a very dismal Prospect.

With some Difficulty we made a Fire determining to go my self with the Man on Board, and after to send for the Rest, one or two at a Time, and accordingly got both into the Canoe, but the Sea immediately drove it with such Violence against the Rock, that overset us into the Water; and I being very weak, 'twas a great while before cou'd recover my self, so that I had again a very narrow Escape from Drowning.

The good Man with very great Difficulty, got on Board himself without me, designing to return the next Day with better Conveniencies if Weather wou'd permit.

'Twas a very uncomfortable Sight to see our worthy friends in the Shallop stand away for the Shore without us: But God who orders all our Affairs (by unseen Movements) for the best, had doubtless Designs of Preservation towards us, in denying us that Appearance of present Deliverance: For that Night the Wind coming about

about to *South-East*, blowing hard and being dark Weather, our good Friends lost their Shallop, and with extream Difficulty sav'd their Lives: But, in all Probability, had we been with them, we must have perish'd, not having Strength sufficient to help our selves.

Immediately after their getting on Shore, they sent an Express to *Portsmouth* in *Piscataqua*, where the good People made no Delay in hastening to our Deliverance, as soon as Weather wou'd allow: But to our great Sorrow, and for further Tryal of our Patience, the next Day continued very stormey, so that, tho' we doubted not, but the People on Shore knew our Condition, and wou'd assist us as soon as possible, yet our Flesh being near spent, no fresh Water, nor any Certainty how long the Weather might continue thus, render'd our Circumstance still miserable, tho' much advantag'd by the Fire, for now we cou'd both warm our selves and broil our Meat.

The next Day, our Men urging me vehemently for Flesh, I gave them a little more than usual, but not to their Satisfaction, for they wou'd certainly have eat up the whole at once, had I not carefully watch'd 'em, designing to share the rest next Morning, if the Weather continu'd bad: But it pleas'd God that Night the Wind abated, and early next Morning a Shallop came for us, with my much esteemed friends Captain *Long* and Capt. *Purver* and three more Men, who brought a large Canoe, and in two Hours Time got us all on Board to their Satisfaction and our great Comfort: Being forc'd to carry almost all the Men upon their Backs, from the Tent to the Canoe, and fetch them off by two or three at a Time.

When we first came on Board the Shallop, each of us eat a Bit of Bread and drank a Dram of Rum, and most of us were extreamly Sea sick; but after we had cleans'd our Stomachs, and tasted warm nourishing Food we became so exceeding hungary and ravenous, that had not our worthy Friends dieted us (and limited the Quantity for about two or three Days) we shou'd certainly have destroy'd our selves with eating.

We had also two other Vessels came off for our Assistance, if there had been any Necessity (so generous

and charitable were the good People of *New-England*, in our Distress) but seeing us all on Board the Shallop made the best of their Way Home again.

At Eight at Night we came on Shore, where we were kindly entertain'd my self and another at a private House (having Credit sufficient to help us) all the Rest at the Charge of the Government, who took such care that the poor Men knew not the least want of any thing their necessitys call'd for or the kind and generous *Gentlemen* cou'd furnish them with (the Care Industry and Generosity of my much honoured Friend *John Plaisted*, Esq; and Captain *John Wentworth*, in serving both my self and those poor Men being particularly eminent) providing them a good Surgeon and Nurses 'till well bearing the Charge, and afterwards allowing each Man sufficient Cloathing; behaving themselves in the whole, with so much Freedom, Generosity and Christian Temper, that was no small Addition to their other Services, and render'd the whole worthy both of Admiration and Imitation; and likewise was of the last Consequence to the poor Men in their Distress.

Two Days after we came on Shore, my Apprentice lost a great Part of one Foot, the rest all recover'd their Limbs, but not their perfect Use. Very few (besides my self) escaping without losing the Benefit of Fingers or Toes, &c. tho' thank God all otherwise in perfect Health; some sailing one Way and some another: My Mate and two or three more were in *England* at the first Publication hereof.

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